

Draft**Forthcoming in Choreographic Practices, Vol 5 issue 1, 2014****Creative Articulations Process (CAP)****Jane M. Bacon**, University of Chichester**Vida L. Midgelow**, Middlesex University**Abstract**

This article outlines the ‘Creative Articulations Process’ (CAP), offering ways of coming into knowing in/through/about one’s own dance practice. This process, developed by the authors in the context of The Choreographic Lab, seeks to enrich creative activities through an elaboration tacit knowledge and practice as research. The article establishes the foundations of the process, briefly introducing the work of Hincks, Gendlin and Damasio, alongside others. It then goes on to take the reader through the six facets that form CAP – ‘Opening’, ‘Situating’, ‘Delving’, ‘Raising’, ‘Anatomizing’ and ‘Outwarding’. The article is written to encourage an active engagement, providing strategies and prompts for the artist/researcher.

Keywords

embodied

dance

felt sense

language

experience

articulation

practice as research

Opening: giving space and time

Situating: (what I know today about) what brings me here, where I am

Delving: (I wonder) what interests me...

Raising: working to render what I have and/or what I do...

Anatomizing: working to expand/broaden/trial/clarify my practice

Outwarding: bringing my findings to fruition and newly noting (perhaps) future
directions/spaces/times that draw me

Insert 1

Figure 1: Photo by Tim Halliday

What follows is an approach to mentoring and guiding artists/practitioners/scholars in a deeper exploration of his or her creative process. In essence this is a model, with accompanying strategies, for the development of a praxis, or reflexive practice, and for ways to ‘give voice’ to your practice. It has been developed by Midgelow and Bacon over a period of about ten years in the Choreographic Lab (and also before this as part of our teaching in higher education) because of an interest in and commitment to the important process of being fluent in and about our dancing and dance-making processes that might otherwise be largely hidden or ‘lost’ as physical, emotional, intuitive and perhaps even ineffable activities. In particular, during 2005–2008, with generous support from Arts Council England¹ we worked to develop particular strategies for bringing dance- and

movement-based performance into language – in order to perhaps make it more tangible or visible, in order to be able to know it ‘otherwise’.

The ‘Creative Articulations Process’ (CAP) described here will be useful to anyone involved in dancing and dance-making processes and beyond into any artistic practice. The model engenders an attitude of curiosity and openness to aid a process-oriented reflection in order to open up the artist to new ways of working and making. It might be employed at any time within and in relation to creative work. It might, for instance, be something to turn to when there is a feeling of ‘stuckness’. You may be drawn to use it when your understanding or sense of orientation becomes ‘blocked’ or when you are (re)searching elsewhere for an answer for CAP offers a containing structure to help us deepen our own understanding of our practice and, in turn, invites developments and alterations in our practice.

For the authors, CAP has emerged over time particularly in relation to the development of practice as research and doctoral research in a university context, but has also been taken forward with dance artists operating in many fields (and the images used alongside this text are from some of these many contexts).² Within the context of artistic research (whether undertaken inside or outside the higher education environment) we argue that researching is not something that occurs before or in some parallel relationship to the creative practice (something done to ‘inform’ or ‘frame’ your practical work). Rather researching for the dance artist is found within the processes of dancing and making – it is this understanding of artistic research as operating within and through the doing that

has led us (in part) to develop processes through which knowing and languaging can arise from within these very practical and embodied research processes, which are in turn enriched by the process of us becoming more explicit about them.

Further reflecting and addressing the recurring debates within practice as research as to the nature of knowledge that dance practice ‘holds’, CAP seeks to draw upon and retain what might be described as tacit knowledge (or to use Marina Abramovic’s phrase ‘liquid knowledge’ (cited in Nelson 2013: 52)) – occurring through emergent, embodied and intuitive processes. These modalities are those also commonly recognized to be at play within dance practice and in practice as research more widely. We put our belief in these ways of knowing and employ them, in turn, as methods through which we can develop and articulate artistic practices. Importantly, we seek to ‘stay close’ to creative practice and the somatic in order to know the practice (rather than sidestepping into other discourses or borrowing ways of knowing from systems that are in some way removed from the creative experience and the bodily).

What is then unique about this model is that it attempts to foreground the lived body, to lend voice to an embodied knowing and to develop a consciousness that embraces the wonder of knowledge that resides in our practicing, dancing, performing body. It works from an understanding, and belief, that there is much we do not and may not be able to know and articulate, but that the *attempt* to do so enlivens both that which we do know and that which we do not. In other words, it is in the spaces ‘between’ that this model asks us to linger in order to allow for something more to emerge.

What is the model?

CAP contains six phases, or better, facets – ‘Opening’, ‘Situating’, ‘Delving’, ‘Raising’, ‘Anatomizing’ and ‘Outwarding’ – and each facet contains prompts to foreground lived experience and embodiment as the place from which there can be a revealing and articulating of creative practice. In naming each phase a facet we position this process in alignment to Hincks (discussed below), and implicitly suggest that each phase might be thought of as illuminating a different face of the same thing, or a different side of the same issue, like a gem with many sides.

The name of each facet in the model implies action. You might take a moment to notice that in your body. How does it feel to be working *with*, *as* and *from* ‘Opening’, ‘Situating’, ‘Delving’, ‘Raising’, ‘Anatomizing’ and ‘Outwarding’? The processes might be thought of as akin to fishing, mining or any other activity that involves going more deeply into one place to reveal more than you had previously. We hope you find the words evocative, emergent, imaginative and symbolic.

Both the facets and the model are iterative and cyclical, any single facet may be used in isolation (as a quick moment of articulation) or as a through line of enquiry requiring a longer dwelling within the process. Throughout the model your practice is implicit. In many of the tasks you may be writing but that writing is predicated on the basis of your practice. In other words your practice should be your partner, at once deeply connected to who you are and yet some ‘thing’ in its own right to be discovered afresh in each facet

and each task. Moreover, we have found that ‘Opening’ is really implicit in all the facets so we encourage you to return repeatedly to ‘Opening’ before progressing. If it were a poem, a piece of music or a dance, ‘Opening’ would recur like a chorus weaving between the other phases and giving shape to the whole:

...Opening: Situating: Opening: Delving: Opening: Raising: Opening:

Anatomizing: Opening: Outwarding: Opening...

Insert fig 2

Figure 2 Sketch and words by workshop participant

***Opening:** In giving space and time we begin to breath, to settle and encourage a sense
openness, expanding into not knowing*

***Situating:** Here there is a noting of what we know today about the things we bring and
where we are. We allow ourselves to notice and name all that we can about the situation
as we know it right now.*

***Delving:** We ask (I wonder) what interests me? Allowing ourselves to be open to what we
might be interested in today. What possibilities are you drawn to? We work to do this
without judgment and without knowing where this will lead.*

Raising: *In working to render what you have (made) and/or what you do, we consider the ‘thing you have’ from many sides and perspectives. Describing in great detail but working with an attitude of openness, we may come to know that which is (perhaps) familiar anew... .like encountering something for the first time... not knowing what it is.*

Anatomizing: *If in Raising we worked to consider afresh the ‘thing you have’, here we begin to broaden/trial/refine your practice... exploring many emerging possibilities. This facet elaborates and expands your practice, giving rise to iterations, tangents and potentialities as we bring into being many versions, many shimmering refractions.*

Outwarding: *Here we begin bringing these findings to fruition and share them with others. This is both a moment of naming and labelling as well as a moment of offering into a more public arena. It is an opportunity to trace the process you have followed and to name your practice/work – articulating more fully. We move deeply into the territory of future directions/spaces/times.*

A little something about the theoretical underpinning

The model draws in particular on the work of philosopher and psychotherapist Eugene Gendlin’s *Focusing* model (1978), the related concept of ‘somatic markers’ as developed by neuroscientist Antonio Damasio, the unpublished model of creative process developed by *Focusing* Trainer Josiah Hincks’ five-Facets Process (see pages xx in this issue).

Antonio Damasio (2000) suggests that our thinking requires our feeling or body states in order to fully judge and interpret information. He explores the role of feeling, as distinguished from emotions, in brain functioning and states that thinking is not simply located in the head, irrespective of the type of thinking, but also in the many neural pathways throughout the body that are activated in processes of perception and cognition. He suggests that these 'somatic markers' (Damasio 2000) provide us with vital information that aids our decision-making processes. Psychiatrist Ian McGilchrist, author of *The Master and his Emissary*, suggests that there may be a danger of assuming that these 'somatic markers' only exist as a tool for cognitive reasoning (2009: 185). McGilchrist examines the structure and function of the brain through an exploration of 'all living things: our bodies, ourselves and the world in which we live' (2009: back cover).

Psychologist Eugene Gendlin's (1978) conception of the 'felt sense' offers a slightly different approach. The 'felt sense' is similar to Damasio's 'somatic markers' but differs in important ways. The 'felt sense', according to Gendlin, is always present and available to us and may offer new ways of experiencing if we allow ourselves time to dwell in the 'felt sense' we have before interpretation or meaning. Gendlin's 'felt sense' or experience offers a move beyond McGilchrist's concern about the possible usurping of 'somatic markers' as 'only' for cognitive reasoning. Gendlin suggests the 'felt sense' can be experienced in a similar way to our experience of feelings or sometimes it can have an evaluative tenor or it can appear like intuition, providing us with information we did not previously have access to, and it usually contains something like cognition (1996: 66).

It is significant that these terms describe something that is initially beyond our conscious awareness but always present. It attends to the effort of trying to find that moment before you know what you mean. Rather than saying 'I am nervous'. We speak from the 'felt sense', perhaps 'my heart pounds', then I take a breath. Then wait and see what else comes. What more arrives. This 'felt sense' becomes incredibly and uniquely specific to the individual and can be brought into consciousness by slowing down, taking time to notice our internal world and allowing what we notice to take shape and form in image and language.

Another influence is that of Authentic Movement founder Janet Adler's work on witness consciousness, which, in turn, developed from C. G. Jung's ideas about 'active imagination' and her understanding of mystical studies (1995). In Authentic Movement we work with what we do not know and allow movement in this space/place. This practice is relational in that we work with a witness but we are also working to develop our inner witness. This embodied consciousness, or reflexivity, is similar to all the approaches mentioned above but it also includes what we might call the 'unconscious', 'mystical', 'creative', 'intuitive' or whatever aspects of experience we find hard to explain and rationalize.

But there is a danger in using science, or scientifically informed concepts, to help us define our model. It is precisely what we do not want to do. These theories are helpful in that they locate the model in a wide field of research exploring the body mind

relationship and this research spans across the broadest reaches of the humanities and sciences.

However, for us, the central concern has been to develop processes that enable us to work with a bodily felt sense of our creative process in order to bring it to consciousness. We acknowledge that this embodied enquiry is a place of paradox. It is a place that often eludes the rational. Grosz writes that

knowledges are a product of a bodily drive to live and conquer. They misrecognise themselves as interior, merely ideas, thoughts, and concepts, forgetting or repressing their own corporeal genealogies and processes of production. (1995: 37)

Following this we welcome and embrace the non-rational, the unconscious. We want to acknowledge that every step towards increased consciousness in and about our creative process will also generate its opposite. We want to acknowledge that consciousness is embodied and that embodied consciousness has its own clarity that can be articulated in new and resonant ways given time, space and practice.

Closer to the field of dance there are similarities between this process and the Liz Lerman 'Critical Response Process' and the RSVP cycle by Lawrence and Anna Halprin (1970). Lerman describes how her 'Critical Response Process' emerged from choreographic, mentoring and teaching contexts and states that it works from principles that 'Turn

discomfort into inquiry. When defensiveness starts, learning stops. If you respect people, they will do better work. Through sequence, preparation, and patience, anything that needs to be said, can be said' (see page XX in this issue). Providing a structured stepped model through which to give and receive feedback Lerman's process is ritualistic and, similar to CAP, values the importance of taking time and creating the space to frame considered, 'neutral', questions in relation to choreography so as to avoid the desire in the viewer to provide 'solutions'. We too avoid offering solutions, opening instead ways in which you might come to your own insights and find your own directions of travel within a moment. In Lerman's model, the process creates a safe space where the artist might ask the questions of themselves about the work they are making and receive feedback from the audience. In CAP we are interested in the way in which the artist might work to know more about their arts-making practices, without concern for an audience, and to develop their capacity to find language, to become articulate, from within the work.

In a related fashion Halprin's RSVP cycle seeks to support groups to undertake the difficult processes of creation and operate in non-judgemental ways as groups shift through the processes of identifying resources, scoring processes, 'valuation' and performance. Like this cycle CAP welcomes a fluidity, a back and forth, a cycling into and out of what we can and might know about what we do, what we can and might *not* know about what we do.

It is also worth noting that some dancers might find resonances in this work with somatic approaches such as BodyMindCentering®, Feldenkrais, Skinner Releasing Technique

and Yoga Practices. Indeed such previous experience might be useful in that somatic practices in dance (whilst diverse and nuanced) can be seen to coalesce around an integrated mind–body approach. Such practices and the kinaesthetic awareness that they encompass are certainly useful, however, as in relation to Hincks and Gendlin, they bring us to a ‘yes/and’ moment in relation to CAP. The ‘yes/and’ here indicates ways in which we both acknowledge and draw on such awareness particularly as part of the recurring facet of ‘Opening’; at the same time we also ask that you work reflexively with your somatic self/practices. Be open to that which is new here and what might be not yet known in your own processes of articulation rather than falling into (a perhaps too) comfortable sense of your embodied self.

Finding words

CAP involves a process of working towards clarity of language and within the model there is an implicit commitment to articulation of many sorts. In these processes we are concerned to ensure that each person, in each moment, finds the ‘right’ words, ‘good’ words, the words that are good and right for that situation and that person in that particular moment and context. Finding such words is hard to do. Words are nevertheless important to assist us in becoming more lucid – more reflexive in our practices. Coming into language is a significant process through which experiential, material and emergent forms of knowledge can be foregrounded, processed and shared. As the writer/poet Lyn Hejinian would have it, ‘language gives structure to awareness’ (2000: 345). There is a difficulty, but absolute imperative, in evoking ‘good’ words. These words, according to Les Todres, involve a naming of experience and sensation (2007: 28) to make fresh sense

of lived experience, opening the said, and the unsaid, life of creative practice. This notion is drawn from Gendlin's practice of *Focusing* (which we mentioned above) in which there is a time of noticing and trying to describe the felt sense. In struggling to find words that feel right and good in each situation there is a testing – a passing around of a word, a phrase, to sense its appropriateness, its 'fit' to the felt experience the words seek to encompass. This is very different to interpretation and attempts to avoid judgement as a process of assessing the value of a thing in relation to an external force. Here judgement is an internal and ethical, for each person, process – I judge that this or that word is right and good for me and my work at this moment. For example, I might say 'I feel stuck and this is such a familiar feeling, I always get this when I get to this stage in my process, I don't feel like my work is any good, I don't know how to move past this point'. But if we stay with the felt sense, your felt sense of 'stuck', then we might find language that arises from the 'felt sense' of 'stuck' becomes much more specific, and therefore more resonant with your lived and embodied experience. These 'good' and 'right' words are a significant part of developing the synergy between somatic and conceptual knowledge – for in tight multi-directional looping circles experience, words and knowledge intersect. Once we begin to understand our relationship to our creative practice more fully then we might begin the process of situating it in its wider artistic and theoretical context.

Why might I be drawn to use the model?

Because it is for artists and academic/practitioners, because it is flexible and because the premise is to give you time and space to attend to your creative process rather than to comment upon it. It is not a model for engaging audiences (although it might be used in

that way). It is not about interpreting or critiquing your work (although in time it might help you to do so in meaningful ways). Further the model does not seek to provide answers or give, for example, a student choreographer steps to follow in how to make a dance (but it might help you to find your own answers and choose your own next steps when making choreographic work).

Its primary purpose is to support an emerging artistic practice so that it serves the needs of the artist in a particular moment – although the size, scope and nature of that ‘moment’ can vary. As such you might use CAP in relation to an initial impulse, a single image or movement phrase, as part of a larger process or perhaps when you have performed or ‘completed’ a choreography, or even in response to your practices as an artist overall.

It does not matter what stage of a creative process or practice-led research project the individual or group has reached because the model can be used at any and all stages as long as there is a collective interest to ‘know’ more. Precisely where we enter this model will be determined by where you are in your creative process. However, the aim is always the same – to use ‘the gap’ created in focusing or to draw on the ‘implicit’ as a place where we can move into language (and we mean that in spoken, written, danced or other forms of articulation) from the bodily felt experience in order to speak or move from a language/place that is grounded in our bodily experiences (of both maker and viewer) of the creative work.

As such the most significant reason to use this model is that you are curious to know more about what you do and you are open to spending time in this process of (self) investigation. Remember, feel free to use the model as a whole unit or allow yourself to choose only one facet. Perhaps you could allow yourself to notice, as you complete each facet, to ask

‘do I have a felt sense of what I want now?

do I want to know more?

is this enough?

I know I can always return to another facet at another time’

What will I need to do this work?

An attitude of openness and interest to know more is a good starting point. You will need another person and perhaps performers for some tasks, plus, pen and paper, a space to dance or move and other creative tools. Most importantly, you will need time and space to put to one side your usual preoccupations and responsibilities.

Insert fig 3

Figure 3 Image of CAP workshop participants creative response

What will I be asked to do?

You will be asked to spend time with an open and curious attitude to your current artistic practice. You will be asked to slow down, to discover and then put to one side your daily

worries and concerns in order to be as fully present with who you are as an artist at this moment in time. You will be asked to breath deeply, to close your eyes, to become aware of as much as you can. From this place, you might then take up the opportunities and strategies offered to speak or mark upon a page (in words and/or images) and perhaps work with specific moments of practice in the presence of a witness in order to come to know whatever you are working with afresh or ‘otherwise’.

As such the investigations CAP will prompt you towards an engaged awareness of your fully bodied phenomena so that you might penetrate the very fluids of the body and its sensorial and felt capacities. From the experience of these engaged places articulations will arise. They may take the form of fragmented or rounded descriptions, they may have the tenor of narratives but they may also be imaged, felt, sensed. In generating these descriptions you are asked to delay the act of meaning-making, interpretation, opinion or judgement – side stepping the desire to label a thing and let yourself find words that resonant with the moment before you have your interpretation. The moment before you think you know what it means. These words will, we hope, resonate with aesthetic textures and human experience, with the ‘more’ of the unsaid and, as you work through the facets, the ‘howness’ of how things appear comes to the fore, and fertile excesses, that are the stuff of understanding, may emerge.

How will I begin?

In CAP a significant beginning is the clearing of a time/space. We ask that you commit to creating an opportunity for openness and ‘not knowing’ within yourself and with others,

for from here we might be able to experience things anew. Remember that the model is an offering and how you use it should be determined by your ‘in the moment’ response to each and every facet.

The CAP

‘Opening’

*In giving space and time we begin to breath, to settle and encourage a sense openness,
expanding into not knowing, we dwell here...*

clearing a space...

bringing awareness into my body

Or

waiting until something comes into my awareness

Or

choosing an intentional starting point

And

waiting to see what of it wants my attention.

These strategies allow me to take the time and to ‘notice’ the felt sense that arises in my body in a particular moment or in response to a particular set of circumstances. I aim to access, acknowledge and work with the direct bodily experience of my creative process or the product I have created. This place may be much richer than the words I give to the experience, this is ‘the implicit’, the ‘somatic marker’ that occurs in the body–mind

landscape that is (usually) an unconscious process just before the articulation of interpretations. This process of 'noticing the felt sense' allows me to give this bodily experience time and space to emerge and to work with a lack of clarity as a positive space where new modes of creative and intellectual articulation can be nurtured into life/form.

Can you feel the space behind your back?

Can you feel the space of the room?

move around room noticing and feeling/sensing the space.

Now find a quiet place to sit or lay down and close your eyes.

Begin to turn your attention inward

what do you notice if you begin to turn your attention inward?

breath, heartbeat, more...

name as much as you can

What do you hear internally – voices, sounds?

What do you see internally – images, colours, shapes?

What do you feel and sense internally – emotions, sensations?

Next I begin to settle down with a particular interior sensation or bodily experience that is drawing me.

I sense how it feels

I let it know I hear it.

And

Take time to sense any changes

And

Acknowledge the presence and lived reality of this

Or

Sense if there is something more that wants to be known

What do I know?

How do I know that I know this?

Is there a bodily sense of my knowing?

Take time to write down as much as I can recall.

Use the lists above as a prompt.

This process takes time and suggests a ‘dropping’ into the self, usefully enhanced by a dropping into your body and floor that supports you. There is here a sense that in allowing the weight of the body to fall away, and the breath to elongate, processes of waiting and emergence become more comfortable. This waiting and non-doing may be prolonged, but may also be held with lightness as more fleeting possibilities flutter within this state of dwelling.

We have given a lot of space to ‘Opening’ because it is the prerequisite to all the steps, and as we indicated earlier, you might return to this step as a beginning for any of the steps or as a process in its own right.

Now, what next? The space is clear, I am open to know what I do not yet know

‘Situating’

Here there is a noting of what we know today about the things we bring and where we are. We allow ourselves to notice and name all that we can about the situation as we know it right now. Part of this might include naming and situating our judgements, stuckness, pulled muscle, boredom with familiar patterns... we name all of this and lay it out like laying the table for a beautiful meal

Here you are asked to notice and note the situation. This process aids in the recognition of all the things you have to hand, what it is you bring with you and how, perhaps, you arrived here. Along with the processes of ‘Opening’ in which you cleared a space, this stage locates you and brings to consciousness the situatedness of experience. This process may allow you to notice perceived assumptions and limitations and unseen or overlooked possibilities. By ‘becoming situated’, you are not ‘grounded’ in the negative connotation of a ‘stuckness’, a ‘grounding’ into one place where you might be overwhelmed perhaps by the situation, but able to acknowledge and operate consciously within and beyond that situation. You might even begin to imagine space for difference.

These are my contexts...

And/Or

this is the context of my practice...

And/Or

this is the context of this moment/this work...

this is the body I have (trainings, physical memories, capacities etc)..

these are the tools I have (genre, discipline, camera, editing software, etc)..

these are the people I am with...

this is the time I have...

this is the place I am in...

these are the things I bring...

these are the ways I work...

this is 'howness' of how I am here...

So I am working on being open to where I am right now, and now I have a list of the situation I am in. What comes next?

'Delving'

We ask (I wonder) what interests me? Allowing ourselves to be open to what we might be interested in today. What possibilities are you drawn to? We work to do this without judgment and without knowing where this will lead.

Ok, take a breath, a pause, a moment. Set aside your questions and forward-carrying thought processes. Allow yourself to trust that these happen whether you choose them or not and return for a moment, before we begin this next step, to ‘Opening’: to really open to where you are right now, to the idea of taking time with what you do not know, with what is not, what is not yet...

What is drawing me?

What am I noticing right now in my practice?

What are my questions?

What am I curious about?

List them.

What do I want to investigate?

– theme, issue, idea, image, concept, experience, movement, relationship, etc..

Name as much as I know now.

Notice the ‘howness’ of these processes.

What leads from what to what?

How does a ‘thing’ emerge?

Track back and forth,

noting the back stitching or over stitching of one question or idea in relation to another.

Take time to notice your felt sense as it resonates within you in relation to these questions
and your answers.

Find a way (any way) to make this/these felt sense(s) responses visible...
you might dance, draw, write, sound them.

This is surprising. I had decided what the problem was but it seems that I might be wrong. My interest seems to be somewhere else

Insert fig 4

Figure 4: Photo by Tim Halliday

‘Raising’

In working to render what we have (made) and/or what we do, you consider the ‘thing you have’ from many sides and perspectives. Describing in great detail but working with an attitude of openness we may come to know that which is (perhaps) familiar anew...

like encountering something for the first time... not knowing what it is.

Once we have begun delving into our creative practice we may find that there is much more that we do not know. Perhaps more than we do know. This openness gives us the opportunity to introduce another facet: ‘Raising’ offers time and space for further rendering and articulation. Here we begin to look at what we have discovered from many sides.

Describe what you ‘have’

note, draw, speak...

tracking back through and noting what draws your attention

(suspending judgement and working with what is present).

Remember that these words, these images, are seeking to describe rather than 'name' and in this process of rendering the 'thingness' of your moment of practice may find its voice. As such through 'raising' we work from the real, the visible, the tangible for this grounds that which is not yet real, the invisible and the intangible.

Here we begin to explore particular senses:

Visual – describing how the practice appears.

Kinaesthetic / sensation – describing physical sensations, actions, gestures

Aural – describing what you hear, what is the sound of this moment of practice?

Emotional – describing the feeling of the experience

Be detailed, be specific.

Use different voices and perspectives-

 speak/write from the inside

 or, as if you were looking from the outside as a viewer.

Use different types of language-

is it hot, cold, big, small, rough, smooth...

write as the sensate body of your practice.

You might try to describe what you have from a different perspective or position-
turn to look/consider/sense it from another (less usual) direction.

This facet embraces our capacity for noticing, which we developed in ‘Opening’, and gives rise to describing (whilst at the same time asking you to defer processes of naming and leaving aside value judgements and opinions). You might also like to work through the process in pairs. Like in a contact improvisation duet we support each other. You might like to imagine how you could develop David Bohm’s writing about a specific dialoguing process that native North America Indians practice, which foregrounds being ‘able to talk while suspending your opinions’ (1998: 118). Like in an Authentic Movement dyad we work to reflect back what the mover is doing and saying and continue to put to one side judgement and interpretation. In involves skills of embodied listening and noticing and the skills that you have as a practitioner.

In pairs (1)

One speaks, one listens.

Speak about and describe your creative practice/practice research

Listen to the speaker and reflect back only the words they use – resist interpreting or asking questions yet, work on being fully attentive to what the speaker is saying

and trying to say

both write what has been spoken.

compare notes

Notice what has been forgotten, the difference between what you thought you said

and what the listener tells you was said.

swap roles and repeat

Each facet invites you to take your ‘felt awareness’ alongside a particular aspect of your practice. You might choose to move through the whole of this model or only dwell in one facet. We have noticed that the first four facets might be completed in a cycle and the last two may be best used when you are ready to move into a studio setting. In this sense it is possible, but not necessary, to work with the model as Part 1 (facets 1–4) and Part 2 (facets 4–6). Or, you might shift back and forth between two or three of the facets first ‘Delving’, then ‘Raising’ and ‘Anatomizing’ and back, for instance, refining and clarifying your practice with each cycle. Each part or cycle, like with each facet, begins with an ‘Opening’.

We seem to be spending a lot of time imagining practice. Can I do some work on this thing I am saying interests me right now?

‘Anatomizing’

If in Raising we worked to consider afresh the ‘thing you have’, here we begin to broaden/trial/refine your practice... exploring many emerging possibilities.

This facet elaborates and expands your practice, giving rise to iterations, tangents and potentialities as we bring into being many versions, many shimmering refractions.

In this next facet, 'Anatomizing', we focus on taking time to expand and clarify through multiplicity the many possibilities. You can do this over a long period of time as a way to know your practice 'otherwise' or may choose to work quickly and intuitively.

'Anatomizing' suggests ways in which you can practice drawing out, discovering and elaborating without worrying about holding what is generated as fixed or complete. We ask what interests you right now in order to invite you to make versions, iterations and potentialities.

Take the words you created in the task above. Return to each word or image and recall the experience. Try to bring forth the feeling of the experience. Note if and how the memory of the thing is different or the same as the original experience

let your ears see, your eyes hear...

let your leg hold, your arm stand...

Practice these words, phrases, images...

let them be the doing... as an artistic response...

create materials in images, movement, words or sounds to elaborate a moment drawn

(perhaps) from your delving or raising...

... respond to your response

be interested in your response...

work quickly with lightness and speed not knowing what you will do...

And

work slowly with darkness and stillness in one place not knowing what you will do

... continue to imagine and make many versions, many iterations with openness, curiosity

and without judgement...

And/Or

In pairs (2)

Through a call and response approach, work with a partner (or in two groups) to clarify

and expand your practice.

You make an offer – sharing ‘something’ of your work.

Your partner makes a response, emphasising what they are curious about or what

interests them and reflecting back their own experience.

In turn, you respond to your partners offer.

And in calling and responding, by moving back and forth between you,

you may start, through elaboration and refraction, to clarify and expand your practice.

I had never thought of my practice in this way, I have noticed many options, and some of them feel ‘right’ for me. But it is still so new and delicate. How can I develop from here?

‘Outwarding’

If in Anatomizing we worked to expand a moment, here we begin bringing these findings to fruition. This is both a moment of naming and labelling as well as a moment of offering into a more public arena. It is an opportunity to trace the process you have followed and to name your practice/work so you can articulate more fully. We move deeply into the territory of future directions/spaces/times.

In this facet we turn our attention to the completion of a moment, a phase of work or a performance. Now I am ready to share or show something that I have. Whereas the previous facet simply enabled elaboration, this facet allows completion and time to reflect on the thing completed. We deepen our understanding of what is the right next step for this work and for you in relation to this work. It asks what is the right environment for what I want to say about what I know or what I have to perform. This is the facet that helps you expand into the world to share with others, bringing your work to a moment of fruition in performance and/or writing.

Tracking back through your creative process...

Notice the ‘howness’ of your processes

... what leads from what to what?

how does a 'thing' emerge?

... track back and forth,

noting the back stitching or over stitching of one question/step/idea

in relation to another...

Notice the 'whatness' of this practice

Allow the 'whatness' to be 'felt'

You might write about this 'whatness'...

what does it look, feel, taste, sound like?

Raising what you have (made)... articulating through rendering.

What do I have? What can I name? What can I say now? What do I know?

Now, return to any of the tasks in previous facets with the intention of working for

example,

with the particular situation of performing,

Or structuring a piece of writing,
Or placing your performance and/or thinking
in the public arena

Asking how does what I have emerge into the world?

Where, if I follow my felt sense, does it belong?

Where and how might it resonant with others?

What environment, what situation, might support and elaborate what I have here?

Take time to notice your felt sense as it resonates within you in relation to these questions
and your answers.

Now, to move forward we reflect back, seeking to open up next steps and future
directions...

Moving

Draw, write, speak...

what has been revealed to you about your practice in this articulation process?

what has this process allowed you to know, create,

think, sense, experience?

Write this process and note what you have come to 'know'

Notice the gaps, the places where it was hard or easy to dwell.

Here we ask:

What is drawing me?

What is between me and the success of my work?

What is the felt sense of my next step?

Be open and curious allowing yourself to not yet know your next step...

Or

... the unexpected side step

Concluding remarks

We hope that like us, and those many artists and students who have worked with us as we have developed this model, you will be able to pick up and use this work. CAP focuses on the processes of coming to knowing from a place of believing in the significance of where you are and what you have, and in be able to speak of these things in ways that resonate as part of and out from creative practice. It offers a method through which we can articulate artistic research in terms akin to the dance forms and processes of which it speaks. In doing so we offer a tool for embodied reflection, creativity and languaging, giving rise to alternative, art and artist-centred ways of being and writing. We ask you to dwell and to trust in the process and yourself, using the model as a part of your daily creative lives, and perhaps as you become confident with each facet, you may develop

your own tasks, your own questions and prompts as emerging from the openings and insights it gives rise to.

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Notes

¹ The Choreographic Lab (www.choreographiclab.org) hosted ‘Articulating Dance’, funded by the Arts Council England and the University of Northampton, 2005–2008. Bacon and Midgelow, Directors of the Lab, worked as artists and facilitators alongside Gill Clarke, Anna Furse, Guy Dartnell, Yvon Bonenfant, Simon Ellis, Sara Giddens, Robert Daniels and Kerry Wise, investigating and articulating many processes for articulating the ‘choreographic’.

The Lab (founded in 1997) is an artistic and discursive Lab for thinking, talking and creation in the field of dance and beyond; the lab is a breeding ground for

artists and theoreticians to sound shared problems and premises. The lab aims to generate artistic work and curate presentation formats that are inspiring and innovative.

Intersecting strands of work:

- Creative practice: creating and supporting the making of movement-based works
- Dialogues and interventions: creating networks, with scholars, artists and arts organizations and, through partnerships, consultation and mentoring develop new ways of thinking, making and representing dance
- Curating events, workshops and public discourses about current dance and movement practices
- Publications: curating and publishing in dance to support and disseminate new ways of thinking about choreographic practices. (www.choreographiclab.org)

² Bacon and Middelton have been developing approaches to practice-led research in dance and movement-based practices for over twenty years.